



July 5, 2005



Maximum sentence for felon who fired a gun in a Central Falls dispute

A federal judge today sentenced **Louis Segalla**, of Pawtucket, to ten years in federal prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm and shooting that firearm off during a dispute with his mother-in-law on a Central Falls street.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentence, which U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi imposed today in U.S., District Court, Providence. Ten years imprisonment is the maximum penalty for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

At a hearing in March when Segalla pleaded guilty, Assistant U.S. Attorney Lee H. Vilker said that the government had proof that, on May 14, 2004, Segalla, wearing a ski mask and carrying a gun, got into a verbal dispute with his mother-in-law outside 97 Sylvian Street. His mother-in-law recognized his voice and saw his face when he lifted the ski mask. As the dispute escalated, Segalla fired the gun but no one was injured. He then fled.

Central Falls police found Segalla hiding in a nearby alleyway. They also found a .25 caliber pistol and recovered two spent casings from the area where the shots had been fired.

Segalla, 31, of 47 Allen Avenue, Pawtucket, has prior felony convictions for domestic violence. The range for his sentence increased to the statutory maximum of ten years because he committed other crimes while possessing the firearm, including assault with a dangerous weapon and firing a gun in a compact area.

Central Falls Police and the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives** (ATF) investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Lee H. Vilker prosecuted it as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with ATF, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 600 years in federal prison.

-30-

Contact: 401-709-5032

Thomas.connell@usdoj.gov

Recent news releases are available at

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/ri/>